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Affairs

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**Defense Management
and NASA Issue Area
Active Assignments**

Foreword

This report was prepared primarily to inform Congressional members and key staff of ongoing assignments in the General Accounting Office's Defense Management and NASA issue area. This report contains assignments that were ongoing as of October 2, 1995, and presents a brief background statement and a list of key questions to be answered on each assignment. The report will be issued quarterly.

This report was compiled from information available in GAO's internal management information systems. Because the information was downloaded from computerized data bases intended for internal use, some information may appear in abbreviated form.

If you have questions or would like additional information about assignments listed, please contact David Warren, Director, on (202) 512-8412; or James Wiggins, Associate Director, on (202) 512-4587.

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MANAGEMENT OF DOWNSIZING

TITLE: DOD DEPOT MAINTENANCE--CAPACITY AND COMPETITION FOR WORKLOADS (709042)

BACKGROUND : This code will support the second year of our depot maintenance task force work. This work will provide the foundation for our supporting key congressional decisions regarding future support for DOD systems and equipment. Congressional interest in this work has been high.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What changes are needed in the allocation of the depot maintenance workload between the public and private sectors? (2) What operational and management changes should be considered to reduce excess capacity and improve the cost-effectiveness of the depot management infrastructure, to include interservicing, consolidation, dual use with the private sector, and closure?

TITLE: REVIEW OF THE FY 1996 DOD BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE BUDGET SUBMISSION (709123)

BACKGROUND : The Senate Appropriations Committee Report requires GAO to annually review the BRAC account to assist the Committee in validating the BRAC budget requests for base closure activities.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Has the obligation rate of previous BRAC appropriations increased in FY 1995. (2) Have findings from prior DOD/IG and Army, Navy and Air Force Audit Agencies' been considered in the preparation of the FY 1996 BRAC budget. (3) Are the cost estimates for projects related to base closure activities reasonable.

TITLE: MILITARY BASES: CHALLENGES IN IDENTIFYING AND IMPLEMENTING CLOSURE RECOMMENDATIONS (709129)

BACKGROUND : The Subcommittee chairman requested that GAO testify providing an overview of our work in reviewing DOD's process for identifying bases for closure and realignment, and our assessment of progress in implementing closure recommendations.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What has been GAO's role in the base closing process? (2) What conclusions have we drawn about DOD's decision making process? (3) What has gone well and not so well in DOD's implementation of closure recommendations? (4) What implications are there for the future in terms of BRAC?

MANAGEMENT OF DOWNSIZING

TITLE: REVIEW OF COSTS AND SAVINGS RELATED TO DOD BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE ACTIVITIES (709135)

BACKGROUND : Compared to initial estimates, DOD's current savings estimates for the 6-year period provided by law to implement base closures activities have been reduced by over \$5 billion, or 60 percent. Excluding estimated revenues from land sales, which have frequently failed to materialize, DOD now estimates it could experience a net loss of \$450 million over the 6-year period.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) To what extent does DOD review and update BRAC cost and savings estimates? (2) What is the basis for current estimates, and how does it differ from the basis used for initial estimates? (3) To what extent does DOD measure actual costs and savings? (4) How well have estimates predicted actual costs and savings?

TITLE: TRANSITION AND REUSE PLANNING FOR BRAC 1993 MILITARY BASE CLOSURES TO CIVILIAN (709137)

BACKGROUND : GAO has previously reviewed the BRAC 1988 and 1991 rounds. This effort extends GAO's monitoring of the transition of BRAC 1993 closed bases to civilian uses.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What are the current plans for disposing of base property closed in BRAC 1993? (2) What successes and what problems are BRAC 1993 bases and communities experiencing? (3) How much federal assistance has been provided to BRAC 1993 closure communities?

TITLE: ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP COSTS AT DOD BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE ACTIVITIES (709139)

BACKGROUND : Estimated environmental cleanup costs for bases being closed under DOD downsizing exceed \$5 billion and are likely to grow as more bases are closed and additional contamination is identified. DOD has begun to accelerate many of its cleanup activities and is substantially increasing its obligation of available funding.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) How much has been appropriated, obligated and expended for base closure environmental cleanup efforts? (2) How are cleanup funds being used and are proper controls in place to assure efficient and effective use?

MANAGEMENT OF DOWNSIZING

TITLE: ANALYSIS OF OPPORTUNITIES TO PRIVATIZE REPAIR OF MILITARY ENGINES WITH COMMERCIAL EQUIVALENTS (709158)

TITLE: DOD'S EFFORTS TO IMPROVE INVENTORY MANAGEMENT (709164)

TITLE: REVIEW OF ARMY DECISION TO RETAIN AVIATION TESTING AT FORT RUCKER ALABAMA (709165)

BACKGROUND : The Army conducts aviation testing at three locations in Arizona, Alabama, and California. About two years ago the Army decided to consolidate all aviation testing in Arizona. Recently however, the Secretary of the Army reversed that decision. The requestors, all from Arizona, have asked that we review the rationale for that decision.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What was the basis for the original consolidation decision? Were cost/benefit analyses conducted and if so, what cost/savings and mission factors were considered? (2) What analysis supports the reversal decision?

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

TITLE: SURVEY OF COMMERCIAL PRACTICES APPLICABLE TO SPARE PARTS MANAGEMENT (709002)

BACKGROUND : Since August 1990, GAO has completed or has had in progress several reviews comparing DOD logistics practices with the private sector. This work has resulted in the identification of new logistics practices for DOD and contributed to budget reductions of \$4 billion. We are expanding these comparisons for Air Force spare parts, given their \$32 billion investment value.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Can DOD save money by changing its current logistics system and reducing spare parts inventories using innovative private sector practices? (2) Can the Air Force eliminate redundant supply and distribution facilities with other aspects of the infrastructure using new techniques developed in the private sector?

TITLE: RESTRUCTURING DEFENSE TRANSPORTATION (709075)

BACKGROUND : TRANSCOM, a unified command, is DOD's single manager for air, land, and sea assets during peace and war. The services, however, continue to maintain separate component commands and associated infrastructure. A fundamental restructuring of the transportation network could reduce unnecessary overhead.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What actions has DOD taken to downsize and reengineer its transportation infrastructure? (2) What economies have been realized as a result of these actions and how can restructuring reduce unnecessary overhead?

TITLE: DOD FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING SERVICE PLANS TO CONSOLIDATE AND STREAMLINE ITS OPERATIONS (709088)

BACKGROUND : The HASC is concerned that infrastructure spending is not being reduced in proportion to force structure reductions. To reduce infrastructure costs, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, plans to consolidate and streamline its operations. DFAS plans to reduce personnel and offices from 46,000 to 23,000 and 360 to 25, respectively, over the next 5 to 7 years.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Does the DFAS plan reflect leading edge business practices? (2) How will DFAS achieve productivity gains that will enable reductions in the workforce? (3) Is the plan's implementation strategy reasonable given the stated timeframes? (4) When will the military services realize reductions in prices charged for DFAS services?

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

TITLE: MORE EFFECTIVE REUTILIZATION OF SURPLUS DOD PROPERTY THROUGH ADOPTION OF COMMERCIAL PRACTICES (709095)

BACKGROUND : The Department of Defense (DOD) disposed of over \$27 billion worth of excess property in fiscal year 1994. DOD's disposal program is under the purview of the Federal Property Act which requires that DOD excess property first be reutilized by the military services before it is transferred to federal agencies, donated to state agencies, and sold to the general public.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Do shortcomings exist in DOD's disposal system that hinder DOD from better recouping its investment in excess property? (2) Do laws and regulations exist that preclude DOD from obtaining higher reutilization and return from sales rates? (3) Do progressive companies have techniques or approaches that allow them to best recoup their investment in excess property?

TITLE: REENGINEERING DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (709098)

BACKGROUND : DMN held a symposium on reengineering in the Department of Defense under code 709049. Due to high interest in reengineering, we are going to produce a video report to disseminate the information obtained in the symposium and to use it as a briefing tool.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What are the major factors contributing to successful reengineering efforts in the private sector?

TITLE: HOW DOES THE PRIVATE SECTOR USE TRAINING TO PROMOTE DESIRED VALUES AND BELIEFS IN INVENTORY MANAGEMENT (709108)

BACKGROUND : To overcome problems with budget cuts and force downsizing, DOD is seeking to improve inventory management by changing its culture and emphasizing economy and efficiency through training. However, DOD has yet to use training in fostering desired changes. The Senate Governmental Affairs Committee thinks private industry may offer good examples for DOD to adopt.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Which large companies are known to be good inventory managers? (2) What is the nature and frequency of inventory management and TQM training they provide? (3) What key-values and beliefs do they seek to develop? (4) Have they measured the results of their training? (5) Are there lessons from private industry that DOD can consider?

Defense Management & NASA

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

TITLE: APPLICATION OF COMMERCIAL PRACTICES TO THE NAVY'S REPARABLE PARTS MANAGEMENT (709140)

BACKGROUND : In 1993, the Senate Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management asked GAO to begin focusing on the feasibility of applying commercial practices for reparable parts to reduce operations costs, starting with the Air Force. This assignment will focus on whether similar opportunities exist for the Navy whose aircraft reparable spares inventory amounts to about \$15 billion.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Can the Navy eliminate redundant processes by incorporating best practices into its operations? (2) What steps are Navy activities taking to reduce reparable parts inventories and repair cycle times? (3) What "best" practices are private sector firms using to minimize their inventory investment in reparable parts and to improve their logistics operations?

TITLE: MILITARY USE OF COMMERCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES IN TIME OF WAR OR CRISIS (709142)

BACKGROUND : The Army has a single, worldwide contract to preplan and provide for on-site support services in time of war or crisis. This contractor service augments U.S. forces with a flexible, commercial capability to support operations. This Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP), has been used in Somalia, Haiti, Rwanda, and Saudi Arabia, costing about \$240 million to date.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1)How does this contract impact Army force structure and infrastructure requirements? (2)What military support services, if any, does this contract supplant? (3)What are the pros/cons/future of this type of contract? (4)Are these contracts properly awarded and administered?

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

TITLE: WHITE HOUSE PASS AND CLEARANCE PROCEDURES (709077)

BACKGROUND : Media accounts indicate that some White House staff did not have permanent passes after being at the White House for over a year. In addition, media accounts and a recent GAO report indicate that individuals whose employment status is unclear have regular access to the White House. Requesters ask that we review White House pass and clearance procedures since January 20, 1993.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Have White House staff responded to clearance data requests in a timely and accurate manner? (2) Have the White House Counsel's office, Secret Service, and FBI processed pass and clearance data in a timely manner?

Defense Management & NASA

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

TITLE: REVIEW OF ARMY PUBLIC PRIVATE COMPETITIONS (709113)

TITLE: REVIEW OF NAVY PUBLIC PRIVATE COMPETITIONS (709114)

TITLE: COST COMPARISON STUDY OF CONTRACTOR-OPERATED PARTS STORE (COPARS) PROGRAM (709115)

BACKGROUND : Conference Report 103-747 on Department of Defense Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1995, directed GAO to conduct a cost comparison study of the Contractor Operated Parts Stores (COPARS) program and any alternative programs the Air Force is considering to replace COPARS.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Is the Air Force's decision to stop using COPARS supported by a valid cost-comparison study? (2) Is the Air Force required by OMB Circular A-76 to perform a comparison of the cost of contracting and the cost of in-house performance? (3) What are the views of COPARS contractors regarding the Air Force's change in vehicle parts procurement systems?

Defense Management & NASA

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

TITLE: COST RECOVERY PRACTICES AT ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL (RMA) (709117)

BACKGROUND : This is a spin-off from "Status of Environmental Cleanup at the RMA" (709037). We identified financial management practices which may result in lost interest to the government. The practices involve the timing of the Army's billing for allocable costs and recover of interest on disallowed contractor costs.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Should the Army submit billings for allocable cleanup costs more frequently? (2) Can the Army recover interest on disallowed contractor costs?

TITLE: DEFENSE AND NASA CLEANUPS FOR CONTRACTORS (709124)

BACKGROUND : During briefings on DOD and NASA environmental issues, the requester's staff asked for reports on the Rocky Mountain Arsenal and on environmental cleanup status and costs at selected government-owned, contractor-operated (GOCO) plants. The report on the Rocky Mountain Arsenal will be completed under job code 709144.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Are cleanup cost estimates realistic? (2) Are cleanup costs equitably shared among responsible parties?

TITLE: CHEMICAL STOCKPILE DISPOSAL PROGRAM CONTRACT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (709125)

BACKGROUND : This is part of a series of reviews on the Army's efforts to dispose of the chemical weapons stockpile. GAO has been asked to examine the final operations verification test results at the Johnston Island prototype facility. Follow-on facilities will be built at 8 sites in the U.S. The program will cost between \$10 and \$20 billion and not be completed before 2005.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Did OVT meet Army's expectations? (2) How will the test results impact program cost and schedule estimates? (3) Have all significant equipment/procedural modifications been tested and incorporated into follow-on facilities? (4) Can partnering principles be used to improve contract management?

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

TITLE: ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL CLEANUP COSTS (709127)

BACKGROUND : GAO's past and current work on environmental cleanup at Rocky Mountain Arsenal focuses on cleanup status and on the Army's efforts. Three congressmen have asked GAO to examine cleanup costs with particular emphasis on the costs borne by or reimbursed to Shell Oil.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What actions have the Army and Shell taken to comply with settlement agreement deadlines and requirements? (2) What reimbursements and allocable costs (including litigation) are reflected in Army and Shell Oil records and in prior audits? (3) What costs are considered allocable vs. Army or Shell-only costs?

TITLE: ASSISTANCE TO DOD-IG AND HILL STAFF IN MONITORING WHCA ACTIVITIES (709131)

TITLE: STOCKPILE AND NONSTOCKPILE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CAPPING REPORT (709134)

BACKGROUND : The Army estimates that it will cost more than \$30 billion to safely dispose of the United States' chemical warfare materiel. Since 1985, GAO has reported numerous problems with the Army's cost and schedule estimates, disposal methods and rates, safety and security procedures, stability assessments, emergency preparedness program, and environmental compliance.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What are the key issues and concerns the Army must address to dispose of its stockpile and nonstockpile chemical warfare materiel? (2) Is the Army's approach the most efficient, effective, and economical way to safely dispose of chemical warfare materiel and meet other program objectives?

Defense Management & NASA

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

TITLE: REVIEW OF THE NAVY'S DECISION TO TERMINATE THE F/A-18 MCAPP TERMINATION (709136)

TITLE: NASA POTENTIAL RESPONSIBLE PARTY ISSUES AT CONTRACTOR SITES (709143)

BACKGROUND : During briefings on DOD and NASA environmental issues, the requester's staff reaffirmed the former Chairman and Ranking Minority Member's request for information on NASA's liability for environmental contamination involving contractors at NASA facilities. In addition, they requested data on contamination for possible impact on restructuring decisions.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What is the extent of known contamination at NASA's contractor operated facilities? (2) What is the estimated cost for restoring NASA facilities, and how much is NASA potentially liable for? (3) Who are the other responsible parties and what is their share of the cleanup costs?

NASA AND SPACE OPERATIONS

TITLE: NASA'S APPROACH TO THE ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF RISKS IN THE SPACE SHUTTLE (709066)

BACKGROUND : The space shuttle is the nation's only means of launching humans into space. NASA says that shuttle safety is the agency's top priority, but officials acknowledge that risks cannot be totally eliminated from the program. Recent news reports have questioned NASA's management of shuttle risks and raised fears of another Challenger disaster.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What methods does NASA use in assessing risk in the shuttle program, and are they credible? (2) What is NASA's plan for managing the risks involved in continuing to fly the shuttle? (3) Do decisionmakers receive all information needed for making launch decisions?

Defense Management & NASA

NASA AND SPACE OPERATIONS

TITLE: CONSORTIUM FOR INTERNATIONAL EARTH SCIENCE INFORMATION NETWORK (CIESIN) (709107)

BACKGROUND : Initially, the Consortium for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) conducted research in the field of earth sciences in support of NASA's Earth Observing System program. However, CIESIN's mission has switched to specializing in the acquisition and distribution of data on human dimensions of global change.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Nature of CIESIN's mission,(2) sources of CIESIN's funding,(3) what CIESIN's annual funding and building requirements should be given its mission, (4) whether NASA is the appropriate agency to oversee the work on human global change,(5) whether NSF's Centers for Human Dimensions of Global Change will function like CIESIN.

TITLE: HRA 9: NASA'S APPROACH TO MONITORING, MEASURING, AND VALIDATING PROGRESS IN HIGH RISK CONTRACT MANAGEMENT (709152)

BACKGROUND : Until recently, NASA acknowledged that its contract management was vulnerable to waste and mismanagement. In 1994, OMB removed NASA's contract management from its high risk list after NASA stated that it had made sufficient progress in correcting contract management problems. However, GAO continued to retain this area as high risk based on our recent NASA procurement work.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What process did NASA use to monitor, measure, and validate the effectiveness of corrective actions in the high risk area of contract management? (2) What did performance measures show about progress in this area? (3) Does the monitoring, measurement, and validation process ensure that deficiencies will be identified early and corrected effectively?

TITLE: IMPLICATIONS OF DOWNSIZING ON NASA'S INFRASTRUCTURE (709153)

BACKGROUND : As the country resizes its civilian space program to match projected future budgets, infrastructure is absorbing an increasingly larger share of NASA's resources. Several independent studies have pointed to redundancies in NASA's infrastructure and duplication of capabilities within NASA and between NASA and the Department of Defense.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What excess capacity exists within NASA's infrastructure (facilities, personnel, equipment, and support contracts)? (2) What recommendations have been made to reduce NASA's infrastructure; what progress has been made in implementing the recommendations; and what are the impacts on NASA's programs? (3) What potential exists to further streamline NASA's infrastructure?

Defense Management & NASA

NASA AND SPACE OPERATIONS

TITLE: NASA'S EARTH OBSERVING SYSTEM COST REDUCTION ACTIVITIES AND SCIENCE PLANNING (709154)

BACKGROUND : Earth Observing System (EOS) satellites will collect climate data for 20 years starting in 1998. Data will be analyzed by interdisciplinary science teams. Life cycle costs total \$33 bil. through 2022. NASA wants to reduce costs through new technology and increased collaboration, without reducing the scientific return. EOS' budget has been cut from \$17 to \$7 bil. through FY 2000.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Has NASA adequately planned for the development and introduction of new technology for EOS? (2) Is collaboration with other entities likely to reduce the cost of EOS? (3) How, if at all, has the EOS science program been revised in response to budget cuts? (4) Does NASA have an adequate strategy to ensure the effective analysis of EOS related data?

TITLE: HRA 9: NASA EFFORTS TO IMPROVE MANAGEMENT OF MAJOR SPACE STATION CONTRACTORS' COST CONTROLS (709155)

BACKGROUND : In 1994, the DCAA identified a number of cost reporting weaknesses by NASA contractors, including those working on the space station. NASA responded by stating that it had developed an action plan to address recommendations made by the DCAA and invited the subcommittee to review its progress in implementing the action plan.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Does the prime contract for the space station contain effective incentives to contain cost growth? (2) Are the prime contractor and NASA preparing cost analyses, variance analyses, corrective action plans and realistic Estimates at Completion? (3) Do the prime and the first tier subcontractors have validated cost and schedule control systems?

OTHER ISSUE AREA WORK-D&NM

TITLE: USE OF FT. HUACHUCA'S ATHLETIC FACILITIES BY CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES (709167)

BACKGROUND : A constituent of Senator Kyl of Arizona alleged that the Ft. Huachuca Command allows free and unlimited use of its athletic facilities by civilian employees. He claims that this has led to (1) an overcrowding of the facilities (2) an attempt by the Command to justify additional athletic equipment and facilities, and (3) unfair competition with private sector facilities.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Under what conditions do Department of Defense (DOD) or Army regulations permit civilian employees to use military athletic facilities. (2) Has civilian employee access to Ft. Huachuca's athletic facilities been the basis for justifying additional facilities? To what extent have private sector facilities been affected?

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Defense Management and NASA Issue Area--Active Assignments